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IMMORTALITY.

A FUNERAL ADDRESS.*

BY T. B. WAKEMAN.

FRIENDS of the departed one! We have assembled here upon a sad, a very sad occasion. The mother, the centre of this home, suddenly stricken down, has left her family bowed with the bitterness of grief. We can only come with the hope to give some consolation,—if possible to repair in some degree the stroke of Death, at any rate to receive the solemn lessons of this hour.

We come, therefore, to give,—to give of our sympathy, our heartfelt, our deepest feelings, which will, we hope, enable the afflicted ones to bear somewhat easier the terrible bitterness of this affliction which cannot but bow them to the earth. That sympathy may be—should be, some relief. The weight that many hands are able to lift lightly, falls crushingly upon one. So it is with the burdens of the heart. Our hearts must bring that helpful sympathy which will raise aloft, by bearing in common, the anguish which falls crushingly upon those who immediately receive the stroke. Such sympathy I know we bring to the husband, children and members of this afflicted household. That may well have been the first impulse which has brought us here. We wish to reach the afflicted with the assurance that they have in all of our hearts some sustaining, some relief-desiring sympathy, which may be to them the beginning of some solace and comfort. To know that others feel with them, that others are living the same thoughts with them, spreads abroad and dissipates the grief which left in one heart would be intolerable. Such relief let us bring and give to this broken home in every way we can, to enable those who suffer now to bear until time and thought bring higher and repairing consolations.

The tremendous and solemn calamities of death may indeed seem more tolerable when felt as a common affliction by those who mourn, but they can be said to be *repaired* only by those general considerations

which come to us not as individuals, but as members of the organised life on our earth, and especially as members, whether we will or no, of Society, of a common Humanity, whose general relations carry the individual out of him or herself. These relations furnish some of the means by which this unavoidable calamity, the calamity of death, may always be largely overgrown and gradually repaired. The simple fact that we *live*, tells to the individual that not alone does he or she suffer, but that Nature orders occasions like this. We meet here the common affliction, the common and natural necessity of all organised life, of all living Nature. This stern lesson brings us at once out of the narrow selfishness of individual grief. It makes us feel, in common with all our living kind, that a “noble resignation” is proper before the inevitable; that we must meet composedly, because certainly, that death which is the fundamental condition of all life. We know how splendidly that lesson has been presented to us in Bryant’s noble poem “Thanatopsis,” worthy to be borne in the memory and locked in the heart of those who may else forget that to be born means to die. The discovery that the generations of the human race, like all the rest of earth’s organised life, are possible only by reason of death,—only by the constant change which death brings into play,—only can thus make room and give the basis of an ever new and increasing life,—leads us into the silent halls of death ready to share the common rest of and with all. To see that death is but a step in the progress of nature, that it is inevitable but that one generation must lay away its predecessor before it can raise itself or its successor to a higher life;—such are the common and general lessons which the evolution of all human, and even of all organised life has to teach. It is the lesson which enables us in some measure to feel that in the community of all organised life we are not as individuals to indulge the inordinate love, affection or grief which would ask, by an exception from death, to sever us from the whole of the organised world, and to render its higher evolution impossible.

But aside from that general lot and fate of all life, let us see what are those other general conclusions and feelings which may repair the loss and grief of the

* Delivered upon the occasion of the funeral services of Eliza Croly Ormsby, wife of Waterman L. Ormsby, Jr., at his residence 265 W. Eleventh St., N. Y. Monday evening, September 12, 1892.

moment. We are human beings, members of the Grand Man, whether we will or no,—of the mightiest organism, co-extensive with the surface of the earth. What this implies it may be difficult to realise, but we see each individual as a part of a family, of a social circle, part of a community, of a city, of a State, and beyond that we see them all as parts of the great community of the nations of the world. Here we have another and a higher consideration, above and different from the simple one of organised life, to which I have referred. We have the higher social, human life, and that general feeling of brotherhood, whose touch is that "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin," and which teaches that all Humanity, all the world, has continuity and solidarity—a sure progress based on ever present death. How that touch lifts us out of our individual feelings, griefs, and narrow creeds!

In consequence of that continuity which we have with and in the world around us, or in some "other" world imagined or real, every religion has made its test point to be, how it can, by that general consideration, remove the terror and the affliction of individual death. Every religion in view of its higher life says, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Next to its treatment of life, the treatment of death is, therefore, the test of every faith. There are generally two ways in which that test has been applied. First, and principally as you well know in the past, the belief in a future individual consciousness in another or a different world has conquered death by a supernatural immortality. Another view has of late years been gaining ground and strength with intelligent and scientific people. They feel that our social community and the progress of the human race from the family of individuals to the family of nations carries in itself a natural human immortality, which is more certain, more real, as a knowable future of the present continuous natural world, than any supernatural world can be which has been in the past either revealed or dreamed.

I stand here this evening because our lamented and departed friend, the mother of this household, and also, I believe, the family who centered around her as the ministering angel of them all, was in no fair sense, a believer in any of the revealed or supernatural forms of religion which has given birth to, which has cultivated, and which has made a solace to millions of the older phase of immortality to which I have referred. Not that she specially denied it. Few do that; but *this* world has become the reality, the other the shadow. The emphasis of life had changed with her as it has to thousands, from that "other" world to this. That "other" was the *ideal*, perhaps, but as such, only a shadow unless it was taken as an ideal to be realised

by and in the future of *our* present continuing world. So common has this change of belief become that, without many words said on the subject, mankind are silently looking to the *natural* heaven of evolution *before* us, instead of to the old heaven *above*. I believe that our departed friend, for instance, has never been known to make any special confession of belief in this regard, yet by action her belief has been so thoroughly incorporated and so thoroughly testified to by her whole continuous, useful, and consistent life, that no one felt that any other conviction than that of the final reality of the present world and of a future in its continuation, could be the solemn basis of her life. The other life may have been, or may be, or perhaps will be: but of that how shall we know? To her that remained an unsolvable problem. To her it were better, then, to not pretend to know, either by word or by deed, what we really do not know. If the world of our early dreams vanishes, it remains to make the best of the world we have, and to make those dreams realities here and now. This world, therefore, became in reality her church, the "*Church of the World*," the broadest, grandest church of all—the only church universal! Its realities, its duties, its hopes, its longing future, building up a future heaven which will be the continuousness, the resultant outcome, the ideal glory—embodying the progress of the ages—that was church enough without the supernatural! Not alone did she cherish that belief, but this church of the world is now the church of so many, and the expression of similar beliefs is so common, as against the belief of the supernatural immortality, that it was but fair to herself, her family, and to you all on this occasion, that the sentiments that she cherished in her life, and which were the basis of that life, should be testified to as the criterion on this her initiatory day of judgment. For by her faith she ought to be judged, and by the creed, such as it was, that she did believe; by that she must stand or fall in the mind of man, and in the hearts of her friends and kindred and family, and before the bar of any ultimate tribunal. But of that I think she would find her thought, in the words of the last poet who has touched on this subject, a poet who dwells at the foot of the Rocky Mountains and sees its snow-topped range as if the limit of earthly life. In this little poem, "Hereafter," by the poet Warman, are a few verses which give expression of the hope for both immortalities on the *common ground* over which lies a sure pathway to each of the homes of the blessed:

* * *

"Dost thou believe that when we take
 "That last long sleep a day shall break
 "The dreamless night? Shall we awake?"

* * *

"I do not know, for sure, I said:
 "I know not those whose light feet tread
 "Yon shore; I know the dead are dead."

"I've seen the summer birds take wing
 "When winter came, and in the spring
 "Come back again to soar and sig.
 "I've seen the red rose in the glen
 "Hid 'neath the hoar frost, die, and then
 "In brighter moments bloom again.
 * * *
 "I've seen a mother die, and she,
 "When came to her what must to me,
 "Looked smiling toward eternity.
 "And I can see while roses bloom,
 "Where roses fade, through life's long gloom,
 "A gleam of hope beyond the tomb.
 "But whatso'er the future be,
 "If there's a life for you and me,
 "To last through all eternity.
 "Twere well to keep this point in view:
 "Do unto man your whole life through,
 "As you would have him do to you—
 "And then, when you are o'er the range,
 "When all are good, though many *strange*,
 "You may not feel too great the change."

Those lines in their simplicity point to the good and faithful life as *the key of harmony* which will enable those who are still able to believe in the older forms of immortality, and those who favor the natural, or newer phase of it, in the Church of the World, to feel that we are together in a Common Solution—a Common Salvation. We face a common fact which both creeds and all creeds must recognise, the decisive fact that this mother, as the head of this family, has achieved a successful, triumphant, useful, glorious life. That such a life was hers is testified to by those who knew her well and best,—testified to by your presence and your sympathetic grief! She had happily reached as a woman the full completion of the term of her human career. While yet but 56 years of age, she was the beloved wife and head of the family, the mother of four children, each of them well established in life, and that largely through her care, and her prudence and her love. Each of those children happily married, have children which look up to her with veneration as the head and centre of all their families which will go on extending we know not how far—carrying the influences of her love and life to future generations. Seldom have the offices and functions of womanhood been so beautifully and nobly achieved and illustrated as in the life of this departed mother. Certainly no function of human nature,—nothing in the progress of humanity,—is more glorious than such a successful and continuous life, "A mother in Israel," a mother in the great Republic, a mother with children to rise up for generations and call her blessed, a mother to send down the love, which is the binding force which holds society, the world, and all of our hopes for the future, together—such a life takes hold of the immortal! For heaven is based upon the triumphant active love, nowhere more usefully and nobly realised. Here, then we find those general considerations, those sustained feelings, which go out and bear the individual

grief with it into the wide and all-unencircled ocean of human life and love. These conclusions rest not on sentiment only, but the facts of life and the continuous world of good. The birds, flowers, butterflies and smiles, seem to furnish only flimsy analogies, but the new corporate human immortality rests upon realities which embody and make immortal all that is of use in life itself. Are not those blessed who rest their affections and hopes in and upon these?

Therefore, that poem has well said, "Do to others as you would they to you." That is the key of heaven. The Golden Rule, common to all of the great religions of the world, brings this assurance, that the departed, no matter under what theory of immortality, as long as she bore in her hand this key—a good life, achieved through trouble and pain and trials such as all of us are called to bear, could not fail to find the heavenly rest. She carried the key, a good and well-spent life, which will open the gate of any paradise. No religion, and hardly a priest *now* dares to rise up and say that a good life will not open the gate of his or of any heaven. Therefore, though she belonged to no church, she has achieved what is the triumph of every church. She has become to us the embodiment of the powers of the good which live, and which make Paradise possible in every phase of human belief. For Heaven only exists because there must be a home in the human heart and in the world for the good.

Death is the loss for the moment in order to transfer to the permanent for all time. Nor must we forget that such transfer must be largely made through us. *To receive*, I said, was a part of our duty here—to receive the results and influences of this life,—to gather them as from a harvest field, made fruitful by her days of toil, her years of anxiety, her triumph as a mother and a wife, her career as a friend, her utility in society. All these, now broken cords of life are we to gather up and receive in our hearts and in our lives. We are to continue to weave them on in the web of the existence of which she and we are parts. In this way her kindred, family, and friends are to receive the imperishable legacy of a noble and well-spent motherhood.

Let your hearts and this home be the place where this higher life is to spring up and continue. She felt that she could not be wrong if as the basis of a useful life she fulfilled her duties here. The religion of this world begins at home. She felt what was contained in that injunction of Shakespeare.

"To thine own self be true,
 "And it must follow as the night the day,
 "Thou canst not then be false to any man."

That feeling, that the performance of the duties of the home and of the family were the highest, were in fact religious duties, became the basis of her life and character. In that her family sympathised with her. She

and they have felt, as in that sentence of Shakespeare to which I have referred, that from the fact the word "immortality" may refer now to our natural immortality, it throws a higher obligation upon those who look upon the world from that point of view, to make this world a reality, to make its duties sacraments, and to shed over the common affairs of life a sacredness which otherwise and heretofore have only been imparted to the supernatural. Singular it is that the word "immortality," as I have heard members of this family say, occurs in Shakespeare only once, and then only in describing this natural, earthly, human immortality and its realities.

We cannot fail on this occasion, therefore, and in view of such a life, to feel that this sacredness, which is thus imparted to the earthly affairs, is a solemn presence. We are here to gather up and receive these resultant influences for good and to carry them on to higher realisations, as the highest, the most religious duty.

It will be but a short time when the present grief will have been mitigated by time and by the considerations to which we have referred. A pleasure it will then be to recognise in the family life a continuation of this true immortality. The worship of ancestors was the first worship of mankind aside from the rude nature-worship of the human race. We need not forget this, and those who take this natural solution of immortality will find a deep religious feeling, a sacred love and a sacred pleasure in continuing all that they have found attached to, and associated with, the memory of the departed. The children who owe their life and all that makes life worth living to her, let them cherish such memorials as relics. The pictures, the incidents, the little affairs of her life, all may thus be preserved from generation to generation, and carry with them feelings of love, affection and reverence, inspiring new love, nerving to new duties, and building up in each heart a shrine in which the dead shall live, resurrected as the angel of a new and higher life. Such I believe will be the treatment which this family will fondly award to the memory of the departed. In all this we sympathise with them. We have brought to them our feelings and earnest thoughts to enable them to bear, to read, and thus to impart as a blessing to others, the life which has been the source of life, comfort, and joy to them.

Therefore, in all confidence,—looking at every faith, taking the results of all beliefs,—we find the philosophy here which can say to the departed, "Rest well, as far as thy physical remains are concerned, in the mother earth from which they came.—As far as the spirit, the mind, the love, the soul, is concerned, rest buried in the hearts and lives of those who have come to enjoy a new life and light by reason of thy ex-

istence." And though her immortality is secured, in all the heavens that man can imagine,—on earth let it not be in mere thought, or expression, but in the actual continuance of the life that has been worthily lived, through time unmeasured and unknown. Bear, then, as nature demands, these remains to our mother earth. Bear the glorious life and the glorious love, that they have been the means of leaving to us, in your hearts as a common treasure, as a reaping of the harvest of a noble life, which will by word and deed still continue to shed its fruits, its grace, its beauty, its usefulness, even beyond the memory of man—forever!

These are the thoughts which the faith teaches; such are the feelings that we are called to cherish; such are the hopes which inspire those who gather around those who fall worthily—the hope, that we may continue worthily the life that has gone from our sight.

CURRENT TOPICS.

Without straining the imagination to excess we can hardly think of Mont Blanc turned upside down; and yet the figure is not extravagant when applied to Illinois. From antediluvian times Illinois has been a Republican Mont Blanc, but all at once by a revolutionary cataclysm it has been turned over. It has become Democratic in every layer of its political formation, and in every feature of its outward shape, with Chicago, the genius of the catastrophe, at the top of it, reconstructing the new and heterogeneous conglomerate. The jostle and scramble for places in the rearrangement makes abundance of grim fun, the rush for office by the winners is the theme of merriment and jest, while the gloom of the losers provokes much newspaper caricature and grin. The mirth is hollow as the echoes of a hammer on an empty coffin; and when I said "grim" I meant it, for in the mocking laughter I can hear some inharmonious tones, not of pathos only, but of tragedy. Like the sinewy wrestling of college boys at a football game is the eager scuffle for office in this land. It excites our sarcasm and our censure, but the moral of it is that men and women have grown desperate in their greed for some honest work to do. I know it is enrolled among the political canons that the victors own the spoils, and it is not for me to doubt the political morality of a dogma, accepted as orthodox and evangelical by both parties; but, still, I sympathise in sorrow for the losers going out; not the rich who have "made something" out of the offices, but the clerks and other subordinates, whose wages has barely been enough to enable them to live. I feel the chilling blast that nips their Christmas tree, for I know how many jibbering, jabbering devils of temptation tantalise men and women driven out of work. "Of all the sad words of tongue or pen" the saddest are these, "turned out of work". They include within them not only all the possibilities of suffering, but all the potentialities of sin.

* * *

It is pictorially written in the rubrics of our civilian prayer book that "the office ought to seek the man," but it very seldom does; and therefore the man is by necessity driven to seek the office. Before he gets it he must "hustle" for it; and that is the reason why thousands of our citizens to-day are "hustling" for every office that has money in it, from that of Minister Plenipotentiary to the humble post of deputy gatekeeper of the county coal yard. At this moment, one of our citizens, who has been three times elected to Congress is an applicant for the office of

postmaster; and his petitions to Mr. Cleveland are scattered throughout the city. Although this form of "hustling" has been criticised on the score of taste, it is justified by our political practice. As it is conceded that the present postmaster, a soldier of eminent service, a citizen of high character, and a very efficient officer, will be removed for political reasons, there is nothing in the methods of this Democratic aspirant that is not on a level with our own standard of ethics, nothing that is deserving of ridicule or blame. To be sure there are men of his own party who declare that there are other Democrats more worthy of the office, and better qualified for it, but that is a very undemocratic objection, as was proved in the case of old Colonel Fitzhenry, who was appointed Register of the Land Office at Marlborough. Some disappointed rivals called an "indignation meeting" to protest against his appointment on the ground that Colonel Fitzhenry, who, by the way, never was a colonel, had not ability enough to fill the place. Just as the chairman was about to put the question the Colonel got the floor and said: "Fellow democrats; whenever was it the doctrine of the Democratic party that a man should have any ability for an office, except the ability to get it?" This argument was irresistible, because it was founded on the traditions of the party; and after giving three enthusiastic cheers for Colonel Fitzhenry, the meeting dissolved; and like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wreck behind.

* * *

On the subject of our civil service, and our method of appointing and removing officers, I have just received a letter from Earl Grey, who was conspicuous as a member of the British Parliament when Mr. Gladstone was an under-graduate at Oxford, between sixty and seventy years ago. Apart from the eminent rank attained by Earl Grey himself as a statesman and a cabinet minister, his letter has peculiar interest because it comes from a man whose father was prime minister of England more than sixty years ago, and the colleague of Burke and Sheridan in the impeachment of Warren Hastings more than a hundred years ago. Lord Grey knows us better than most Englishmen do, because when Secretary of State for the Colonies, he was compelled to study the commercial and political relations that prevailed, and those that ought to prevail, between Canada and the United States, and between both countries and Great Britain. On the subject of those relations as affected by the McKinley bill, he has recently published a book that well deserves the attention of Americans and Canadians too. It is racy of an intellect in vigorous activity, and it is full of wholesome instruction on the subject of international and moral economics. Lord Grey has always been the friend of the American Republic, and anxious for the prosperity of the American people. It is due to him perhaps more than to any other man among the English nobility that Great Britain is to-day an absolutely free market for the produce of our factories and our fields. His opinions on the defects of our civil service are worth listening to, especially as they are given in a friendly spirit, and so I print his letter, excepting some parts at the beginning of it which are on a different theme.

* * *

Howick, Northumberland, November 18, 1892,

Dear Sir:

I received some days ago your letter of Oct. 27th, for which I have to thank you.—With respect to my former letter you are quite at liberty to make what use of it you please; it contains no secrets, and I have no wish to conceal any of the opinions expressed in it....

This great victory ought in my opinion to encourage those who are friends of honest government to take advantage of the power which will soon be in Mr. Cleveland's hands, to make a determined

effort to check the system of corruption which is now prevalent in the United States. Nothing would have so much effect in the furtherance of this object as the passing of a good law with regard to the appointment of the civil servants of the State, and their tenure of office. In this country we have no law of that kind, but long established practice and public opinion have established what I consider to be on the whole an exceedingly good system.

Since the adoption of the principle that "To the victors belong the spoils," the practice which I believe in America was previously nearly the same as our own has been so completely destroyed that I do not think the better system could be restored except by the passing of a new law. But it would be easy to pass a law which would effectually put an end to the present corrupt system. The chief provision of such a law should embody the rules that have now been practically followed in this country during the present century, and to a considerable extent from an earlier period. According to this practice, admission into the public service usually takes place by the appointment of young men to the lowest situations in the various public offices, from which they rise by promotion from one class to another, the selection of those to be promoted when vacancies occur being determined partly by seniority, and partly by a consideration for the comparative merits of the various candidates. No civil servant is ever removed except for misconduct or inefficiency, though the ministers under whom they serve have an absolute legal power of dismissal without showing any cause for it. The improper exercise of this discretionary power, (which it is necessary to give to the ministers in order to secure proper discipline and the authority of the government,) is effectually restrained by the knowledge of the universal condemnation a minister would incur by abusing his legal power.

In the United States where the practice of dismissing public servants merely for the purpose of giving their places to others for party purposes has so long prevailed, some legal check on the abuse of the power (which could not be safely abandoned) would be required. Probably it would be enough to enact that public servants should only be dismissed for misconduct or inefficiency, and in every case in which a dismissal took place the minister responsible for it should be bound to record, in a register kept for that purpose, a statement of the reasons which had led him to regard it as necessary; and that an annual return should be laid before Congress of the dismissals made in the previous year with copies of the ministerial explanations of the reasons for them. To render this system effectual it should include a provision such as that which exists in this country for giving retiring pensions to public servants after certain periods of service. Some law of this kind would secure for the United States what we find of great value in this country—the existence of a body of well-trained and experienced civil servants—while it would also remove one at least of the chief causes of corruption in the Government.

I did not mean to trouble you with this long letter, but I have been led on to do so by the interest I take in the good government of the United States, which is of deep importance, not only to your own nation but to the world.

I am faithfully yours,

GREY.

It will be news to most Americans, as it certainly is to me, that security of tenure has been fixed as a principle upon the civil service of England, not by statute, but by the law of public opinion alone, which in this case at least, appears to be as effectual as the other. The confession of a man who has been a Secretary of State in England, with absolute power over his own department, that he would not dare to dismiss a clerk in his office except for misconduct or inefficiency, because of the "universal condemnation" that would follow such an abuse of legal power, shows how high is the political standard of the English people, and it is also a tribute incidentally to the strength of public opinion in Great Britain. We are compelled to admit that public opinion has no such force in the United States as yet, and a superficial observer might reason therefore that we are behind the English in the knowledge and practice of the higher law, and in the ability to condense public opinion into a command stronger than the statutes. The reason, however, for our apparent inferiority is geographical rather than moral. It is comparatively easy to bring to a focus, and direct upon the government the wills of thirty millions of people living on a small island, but it is not easy to condense into a moral command the opinions of sixty millions of people scattered over half a continent; especially when the people on the island are nearly homogeneous, while the people on the continent are not. While it is very true that the English are dominant in the United States, it is also true that there are other strains of blood running through the arteries of the republic as plainly visible as the Mississippi river in the ocean several miles from land. That all those other strains will become invisible in time is very likely, but not for two or three hundred years to come, although their ultimate fate seems to be inevitable. They must all become English, or cease to be. I do not refer to the English of the British Islands only, but also to the older English by the Baltic shore, and in the valleys of the Weser and the Elbe. It is the colonising quality of the Anglo Saxon race that it can absorb all the other races of the Caucasian stock, assimilate such of their elements as are improving or congenial, and precipitate the remainder in the form of sediment, as the great ocean does. The time is coming when public opinion will be as potent in this country as it is in England.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE METHOD OF SCIENCE AND THE METHOD OF THEOLOGY.

To the Editor of *The Open Court* :

"And men grow pale lest their own judgments
 sh'd become too bright,
 And their free thoughts be crimes,
 And earth have too much light."

Childe Harold.

So wrote Byron over seventy years ago. Two new generations have appeared on the earth since those very significant lines were written. In Byron's time, in Carlyle's and John Stuart Mill's time, the author who published advanced views on theology was tabooed and looked upon as an atheist, infidel, even blasphemer. Poor Clough gave up his fellowship at one of the English Universities that he might be perfectly free to hold and publish the results of the critical modern method of reasoning as applied to the writings of the Old and New Testaments. I read recently a most interesting article on Clough by John A. Symonds written some years ago in the *Fortnightly Review*. He with Emerson and a few others were the pioneers in the forties and fifties of the new views which have now become almost household words. They were spoken then with bated breath.

With the last decade of this century may we not claim the dawn at least of the doom of the clerical theological method of reasoning

as applied to our so-called sacred writings? Do we not weary of the *a priori* method, the *unknown* being taken as *known* and all the rest inferred from it? As Renan shows in his *L'Avenir de la Science* it is not by argument, but by a consecutive course of reasoning that one who holds to the old method is convinced. It is by culture, by wide and extended reading, by rising to a higher point of view, by getting into a tower, as it were, that one begins to see the identity of all religions. "Narrow religion means narrow reading," said Emerson; again, "Every truth rested in becomes false." "Every church, the purest speedily becomes old and dead." Our great essayist just quoted said as long ago as 1841, "Everything tilts and rocks; the bigot can no longer be a bigot; to-day, even the scholar is searched. Is his learning dead, is he living in his memory? The power of mind is not mortification but life."

In a notice of the University of Cairo and the method of teaching there, in a recent number of the *New York Evening Post*, the writer says: "There are at present only three professors of the first rank; this shows how stringent their requirements are. The learning of these is enormous, but their method of thinking and the restrictions of the university prevent it from being of a progressive nature. They mass their facts, but do not use them for the discovery of new truths. The learning of the Orient is not progressive. It is rather a massing of facts gathered from old standard works. New books are not allowed. There is no stimulus for original thinking. Strange to say, even with these men the natural sciences are almost wholly neglected. The reputed Arab astronomers have left no descendants."

I have quoted this long paragraph, because it describes so accurately the precise state of things at some of our own schools and so-called universities. How few of our theologians "warp the churches from their traditions and pierce them thro' and thro' with original perception." How few remember that "the intellectual man lives in perpetual victory." At the tercentenary celebration of Trinity College, Dublin, the Very Rev. Henry Jellett, D. D., delivered the sermon. In an interesting letter in the *Evening Post* of New York, the writer says, "But the speaker ventured a single touch of pathos when, adverting regretfully to the pending breach between modern culture and Christianity, he wondered whether the four hundredth anniversary of the university would be celebrated in a purely secular spirit." Here at least is a clergyman fully alive to the signs of the times, and to know how to read the signs of the times is a great and rare gift.

Those who cling tenaciously to the old orthodox views tell us that with the destruction of the so-called supernatural revelations and marvels, there will be nothing left to feed the emotional part of us and to nourish our hearts. Amiel says very profoundly, "Reason and justice at their base presuppose emotion." Susan Channing in a recent article in *The Open Court* says so truly, "What is to become of mankind when it no longer has any personal God to fear? We can answer that we have ourselves and mankind and immutable laws to fear, forces as strong and retributive when disobeyed as any now attributed to a personal God; and as Eugene Aram feared his dead victim all the more for lying there so still, so we, as education increases, shall fear more and more to disobey the moral laws that lie so still and yet so appealingly to the soul of every intelligent being. As our mind grows we shall more and more act with the wisdom of Aristotle's wise man: 'Do from an understanding of the law what an ignorant man does from fear of the law.'" "Absolve yourself to yourself," said Emerson. "Keep the laws" which he that runs may read. "When all is burly-burly here below, and every one seems bewildered, go not thou astray," taught Marcus Aurelius.

At the end of his "Animal Life and Intelligence," Prof. Lloyd Morgan has a most interesting chapter on monism. He shows very clearly that the modern intellectual man forsakes the old theological views not through force of argument, but through their *incon-*

gruity, their want of harmony with the rest of his knowledge. He argues very forcibly that through this incongruity the old method of reasoning gradually fades away as the mist before the sun. Our outlook broadens with our culture, and we live more and more in the hills of thought—those "uplands that few dare to tread, though they to all belong."

"Who can doubt which method will finally prevail," asks Professor Morgan, "the clerical theological method or the modern critical historical method?"

It is a question of time, and there we can safely leave it.

ATHERTON BLIGHT.

BOOK REVIEWS.

HANDBOOK OF SCIENTIFIC AGNOSTICISM. By R. Bithell, B. Sc., Ph. D. London: Watts & Co. 1892.

The object of this little work is to expound the views of leading English agnostics as to what agnosticism really is and really involves. And no English agnostic is better fitted to produce such an exposition than Dr. Bithell. His age, equable temperament, enthusiasm for philosophy, and experience in both the practice and the penmanship relating to large business affairs, assuredly mark out the author under review as worthy of all respectful consideration at the hands of rationalists, be they readers, writers, or both in similar degree.

Having said so much for the agnostic author of this useful book, the present reviewer must go on to say that, to his mind, agnosticism has been made somewhat too much of by friends and foes alike. It seems very questionable whether the agnostic idea, so adequately propounded by Dr. Bithell, is worth all the serious consideration it has received, in various books and papers, at the hands not only of the author under notice, but of authors more noticeable still.

By "worth" I mean "philosophically worth." The immense practical service to freethought rendered by the courteous and considerate tone of controversy that, before the appearance of *The Open Court*, was the almost distinctive note of agnostic journalism, can scarcely be overrated. And so thorough an agnostic as Dr. Bithell may be pardoned for believing that "the spread of agnostic literature" was one of the two great agencies by which has been effected, during the last quarter-century, the almost revolutionary improvement in the spirit of Christian apologetics.

But, philosophically speaking, has agnosticism any permanent importance other than that attaching to a transitional state of mind in which most calm and cautious rationalists have sojourned, but through which most modern rationalists who are also eager and independent must, if years enough be granted them, eventually pass? I do not think, notwithstanding the disclaimers of Dr. Bithell, that agnosticism can be considered a terminus of modern thought, even in our present state of comparative cosmic ignorance. I do not believe that such men as Herbert Spencer, Huxley, and Samuel Laing, would rest contented with their actual attitudes toward the problems of theism, materialism, matèrio-spiritualism, and "inspiration," could they but add a single generation's life to theirs.

Dr. Bithell himself—with others—is advancing. He no longer posits anything "unknowable." With him, as with the younger disciples of Herbert Spencer, now striving to press on beyond their master, what is "unknown" is the one exact antithesis to that which now is "known." Even the "thing in itself," with belief in which agnostics have been so relentlessly twitted by Dr. James, is opined to be "perhaps not worth much if attained."

For the guidance of those who wish to hear about the arrangement of the book it may be well to mention the divisions treating of "the fundamental postulates of Agnosticism," and of "the agnostic method and its applications." Under the former there are

sections upon feeling, sensation, consciousness, knowledge, relativity, belief, and faith. Under the latter are the headings physical science, physiology, psychology, metaphysics, history, and theology.

It will surprise some to learn that many of agnosticism's "fundamental principles" are also those of everybody imbued with any tincture of scientific philosophy: and were enunciated by all competent writers long before the name of agnosticism was heard in the land. This fact, while establishing the general soundness of agnostics' line of thought, at the same time throws considerable doubt upon the necessity of anyone's calling such well-established speculative canons by the peculiar name of agnosticism.

It is pleasing to learn that Dr. Bithell does not allow any agnostic prudery to prevent a completely positive standpoint upon the questions of psychology. He looks forward to "a general overhauling of the language employed by psychologists," and believes that "as the facts of consciousness with which psychology is concerned lie close at hand, there is no reason why this science should not become a body of truths as firmly established and as free from controversy as those of physical and physiological science." No positive monist could speak with greater assurance and precision. Nor is this by any means the only common meeting-ground disclosed between the agnostic and the Carusian positivist.

Yet if we are to emphasise agreement we must recognise disagreement also. Dr. Bithell's treatment of metaphysics is, in some respects, though certainly not in all, a typically agnostic one. Here are some sentences in point: "But we do not want an apodictic proof of metaphysical truths. If once reduced to demonstrable certainty these truths would be handed over to science and get locked up in text-books or encyclopædias. There is a profound truth in the remark made by Mr. Stewart Ross, where he says in his usually incisive way: 'I believe in proof as regards theorems which are provable. But as regards the higher arcana of existence there are truths I know with such certainty that, were it possible to prove them, the proof might weaken my belief, but could not fortify it.'" This kind of talk is typical of much to be found in the writings of those agnostics only whose leanings are towards a poetically mystical and away from a scientifically positive theory of things.

Between these two kinds of agnosticism, Dr. Bithell, in the book before me (as in other books of his) appears to hold the balance. He is almost everywhere dispassionate and discreet. And his writings should certainly do something to assuage the philosophical feud into which certain agnostics and positive monists have flung themselves with needless warmth, but which is now plainly upon the road towards appeasement. A few further concessions on both sides may lead to the substantial agreement beginning to be earnestly desired by each.

E. T.

GOETHE'S MUTTER. Ein Lebensbild nach den Quellen. Von Dr. Karl Heinemann. 3d improved edition. Leipsic: Arthur Seeman. 1892.

There is a truth in the saying that great men have great mothers, and it is certainly true of the greatest German poet. He derived his talents, his buoyancy, his delight in poetry from his mother. The author of the book before us thinks the basis of Goethe's greatness is of maternal inheritance. He comments in the preface upon a dictum of Otto Karl Lorenz, who says in his "Geschichtswissenschaft," "it seemed to him that all the histories had been written by bachelors and indeed such as have no good opinion of woman." We have many biographies of great men, but none of the mothers of great men. Not even Queen Louise of Prussia has found a biography among German savants. There is a lack of respect for the mother's influence and importance. Mr. Heinemann proposes to set a better example and begins with the biography of the happiest and brightest of all moth-

ers, of Katharina Elizabeth Textor, the wife of Rath Goethe, best known simply as "Frau Rath" or "Frau Aja". He portrays the ingenious woman in her deeds, words, and letters, so that we see her before us as she really lived; there is no idealising, no apotheosis, but the facts of her actual being.

We feel tempted to translate a few characteristic passages of Frau Rath's letters, but find it impossible. Her style is no letter style; she does not write, she speaks as if the person addressed were present; and she speaks her mind too, *sans gêne*, without reserve and directly. So are all her letters, those to her son, those to Wieland, Lavater and others, and even those to the duke and the duchess. She coins new words, she introduces pregnant similes, such as her son or Luther might have invented; her spelling is poor (although this is quite excusable in her time); the connection of the sentences is more logical than grammatical; all in all she is even more original than her son.

This biography of Goethe's mother fills a long felt want. No Goethe scholar can afford to do without it and it should not be missing in the library of any lover of Goethe's poetry. The success which this book has had since its first appearance at the end of the last year is certainly well deserved and considering its popular price (8 marks) not at all astonishing. The many illustrations and reproductions of portraits and other pictures of Goethe's time do not constitute its chief merit but are valuable additions. G.

CHOPIN. Sketches from George Sand's "History of my Life" and "A Winter in Majorca." Selected and arranged from the original by *Laura Wieser*. Translated by Grace Curtis. Chicago: Clayton F. Summy.

This little book is dedicated to those gone before. It contains a selection of passages from George Sand which have reference to that great French author's relations to Chopin. It reads like a novel; indeed it is a novel—romantic, pathetic, and full of the devotion of a great soul to a genius.

BLESSINGS OF THE WAYSIDE. By *Laura Wieser*.

Miss Laura Wieser, one of our Unitarian friends, has selected a number of wayside thoughts from different authors and embodied them tastily in a pamphlet of 20 pages. They can be sent to friends as Christmas greetings, and will everywhere find a warm reception.

Mr. George M. McCrie has published, with the permission of The Open Court Pub. Co., in pamphlet form, his essay entitled "Miss Naden's World-Scheme," which appeared last summer in the pages of *The Open Court*. Mr. McCrie prefixes a short preface to his pamphlet in which he attempts to show a resemblance between his own views on a special point and those of Mr. Charles S. Peirce, recently set forth in *The Monist*. (London: Watts & Co., 17 Johnson Court, E. C.)

On the Heights is the title of a little pamphlet by Isaac S. Moses, Rabbi of Kehillath Anshe Mayriv. Its contents are five sermons delivered on New Year's eve and morning, and on the eve, morning, and evening of the Day of Atonement (viz. Sept. 21 and 22 and Oct. 1st and 2nd, 1892). Those who wish to obtain some idea of what the God and ethical ideals of Israel are, may well read these fervent addresses of Rabbi Moses. (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co.)

The Harvard Graduates' Magazine is a substantial and beautifully printed quarterly. It is not exclusively devoted to the interests of Harvard University, and university men generally will find stimulating articles in its pages. Its editor is Mr. W. R.

Thayer, a contributor to *The Open Court*. The articles of No. 1. (October) are by prominent Harvard graduates. (Boston: 6 Beacon street.)

We have just received *The Agnostic Annual* for 1893. It contains interesting articles on ethics, religion, and philosophy, popularly treated by such authors as Leslie Stephen, Amos Waters, Gerald Massey, A. Momerie, S. Laing, Saladin, Charles Watts, Edward Clodd, &c., &c. Pleasant and suggestive hours may be spent in its reading. (London: W. Stewart, 41 Farringdon street, E. C.)

Fowler, Wells & Co., of New York, have just published a prettily bound volume entitled "The Kaaterskill Fairies" by Mrs. Anna Olcott Commelin, who contributed to *The Open Court* some years ago an article on Lavater. "The Kaaterskill Fairies" is a pretty little tale (forty-three pages including illustrations) and is supplied with a number of sketches.

"All Around the Year," the artistic desk calendar, has again made its appearance.

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